



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2015

No. 10

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 21, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM MCCLINTOCK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

PRISONERS ARE BEING RELEASED FROM GUANTANAMO AT AN ALARMING RATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of legislation I introduced last week as a companion piece to a bill offered by Senator KELLY AYOTTE to protect the safety of the United States and its allies and restrict the transfers of detainees from Guantanamo Bay.

Since mid-November, the President and his administration have ramped up

an effort to make good on a campaign promise to increase the number of Guantanamo detainee transfers. Last night during his State of the Union Address, the President reaffirmed his commitment to close this facility once and for all, and he is releasing prisoners at an alarming rate. Twenty-one terrorists have been released just in November alone to foreign countries. This comes at the expense of our own national security.

H.R. 401, the Detaining Terrorists to Protect America Act of 2015, would suspend the transfer of high- and medium-risk detainees and prohibit any detainee transfers to Yemen as well as increase transparency regarding the remaining Guantanamo detainees.

Detainees at GTMO pose a real threat to our national security. When I speak with folks at home, my constituents, moms and dads, and they ask me how safe we really are, this rate of reengagement comes to mind. The U.S. intelligence community reports that the number of former GTMO detainees who reengage in terrorism has steadily increased since 2002.

According to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, they reported the combined and suspected confirmed reengagement rate of former GTMO detainees has risen to more than an alarming 30 percent. Before we proceed with any more additional transfers, we must ensure the transfer process is further examined and improved.

In order to protect our fellow Americans, we must stop releasing some of the world's most dangerous terrorists, especially given the fact that they are already reengaging in hostilities against the United States and our allies.

This measure would repeal current law that has allowed the administration to transfer prisoners to foreign countries and reduce the population at GTMO down to 127. The bill also would

prohibit transfers of terror suspects to a foreign country if there has been a confirmed case where an individual was transferred from GTMO and engaged in any other terrorist activity.

The bill would also prohibit the transfer of terror suspects considered to be high or medium risk. Some of the most recent transfer detainees fell into those categories.

In addition, this bill would stop the transfer of detainees to Yemen because the country has become a hotbed for terrorist activities. It makes no sense to send terrorists to a country where there is an active al Qaeda network that we know has been engaged in targeting the U.S.

Most importantly, Yemen's branch of al Qaeda, commonly known as AQAP, was founded by former GTMO detainees. Counterterrorism experts have declared AQAP to be al Qaeda's most effective affiliate, posing the greatest danger to the American homeland.

We cannot risk trusting the world's most dangerous terrorists to its most dangerous places, nor should we simply cut them loose in rich, stable countries with no security safeguards in place. We have to ask ourselves today: How much are we really willing to risk with our own national security in our American homeland?

I want to thank Senator AYOTTE for working with me, and I look forward to working with her to advance this legislation. I look forward to continuing our partnership to prevent the release of dangerous terrorists who seek to reengage in terrorism against the U.S. and our allies. This bill ensures our homeland remains safe from those terrorist attacks.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

CONGRESS CAN LEARN FROM CHERYL STRAYED

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). The Chair recognizes

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last night for the State of the Union address by President Obama, my guest was a Portlander, Cheryl Strayed, the author of the best-selling book, "Wild," who is currently being portrayed on the big screen by Reese Witherspoon. This epic story is about how a young woman, reeling from the loss of her mother and the cascading challenges of her life, undertook a journey 1100 miles along the Pacific Coast Trail. It was 96 days of an amazing struggle, overcoming all sorts of difficulties, adversities, as she helped work out her own challenges and issues.

I invited her because I thought the story that she portrayed, the experience that she had, was an interesting metaphor for the sorts of things that we should be doing here. Perhaps we might be able to come together as a Congress, supporting legislation that would help protect some of those special places that are portrayed in her powerful book and in the excellent movie.

In the course of her visit, another thought has made its way to me as I watched her interact with dozens of young people in a variety of meetings on Capitol Hill, fellow Members of Congress, and many other people who were touched by the story of her journey and it made a profound effect on them. She continues to receive hundreds of emails a day from people who were inspired by that effort and her magnificent book.

It occurs to me that it is an appropriate metaphor for what our challenge is as Members of the 114th Congress, because this, after all, is a 2-year journey on behalf of the American people. The question for us is: If we can struggle with that heavy pack, navigate areas where sometimes the trail is a little obscure, can we put our trust in strangers who help us along this difficult journey? Can we be resolute in putting one foot in front of another on behalf of the American public?

Mr. Speaker, it was a very profound experience to watch those interactions, after having seen the movie, and having been entranced by the book. I am absolutely convinced that this is our moment, our journey into something that doesn't necessarily have to be "Wild," even though there is a roller coaster of legislative activity. I am convinced there ought to be enough common interest, common commitment, common goals that we ought to be able to tease out elements that enable us to be successful in our journey.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that people will reflect on that experience of this young woman who was able to overcome adversity and open up an amazing chapter in her life and beyond. I hope we will be able to do the same for the people we represent.

BATTLE OF THE BULGE 70TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I wish to remind everybody about a real-life story of being outnumbered 10 to 1, a story of courage, will, discipline, suffering, immense sacrifice, and success, a tale of two great militaries, surprise, weather, overwhelming force, and sheer resolve. It is marked with the graves of thousands and exemplifies the struggle for the very future of freedom in our world.

The story ends with the 101st Airborne and Patton's Armor being victorious in January and February of 1945, and I think it is important to recognize the accomplishments of all the units who struggled and suffered greatly under the German siege of a small town in Belgium named Bastogne. This January and the recent December marks the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge.

Most people know of the 101st Airborne, nicknamed the "batting Bastards of Bastogne," and the plight of Patton's Armor, as chronicled in so many stories and movies now burnished into the collective consciousness of our Nation, and rightly so.

However, Mr. Speaker, on this 70th anniversary, I want to remind us of an often untold story of the other heroes of the Battle of the Bulge and the little but critical town of Bastogne. It is a story of the American soldiers of the 28th Division from Pennsylvania, who held at all costs.

In late October to mid-November of 1944, the battle of the Hurtgen Forest was described as a meat grinder. The 28th Division was in a fierce battle with the German 73rd Corps. For the 28th, the battle losses were 248 officers and 5,452 enlisted men. After the battle, the weary division needed a rest.

The Ardennes Forest was thick and seemingly impenetrable. It was known as a quiet sector in which the 28th could reequip, reorganize, and assimilate thousands of new replacements into the ranks while the division rested.

Greatly weakened by the previous battle, the 28th Division was spread out over some 25 miles along a front which was more than double that which was recommended in standard practice by any division at the time.

On the morning of 16 December 1944, the peace was shattered by the opening barrage of the Germans opening up one of the largest displays of artillery bombardment ever, signaling the start of Hitler's last great offensive on the Western Front in World War II.

For the next 4 days, without any sleep, often without food, elements of the 28th Division and their affiliates fought continuously, often until the last bullet and life, to deny the enemy success. It was exceptionally cold, foggy, damp, and, of course, snow cov-

ered, exactly what Hitler had counted on, as the winter would only add to the element of surprise.

The German 5th and 15th Panzer Armies, 6th SS, and 7th Army attacked the U.S. 8th Army in a line between Aachen and Bastogne with a plan to go as close as possible down the seam between American, Canadian, and British forces to split them.

After crossing the Meuse River, the attacking Panzers were to turn north and capture the port city of Antwerp, thus collapsing the supply lines and the alliance.

The timetable established by the German general staff and German high command called for the capture of the entire 28th Division sector early in the morning of 16 December and the capture of Bastogne by the same evening of that day. Bastogne was a major road junction which was needed by the Germans for armor and resupply units.

In the early morning hours of 16 December, the 28th Division received a message telling them to hold at all costs. Keystoneers, as they were known, were dug in and began the slow and painful art of trading space for time, trading space for time and life.

The 110th Regiment was soon surrounded and fought to the last round. From 0530 that morning of the 16th until sometime late in the afternoon of the 18th and early on the 19th in some locations, men of the 110th Infantry Regiment fought and held, giving ground only when forced out, but all the while buying precious time for General Eisenhower to find and move reserves forward from deep inside France.

The other two regimental combat teams of the division, the 109th and 112th Infantry Regiments, did only slightly better. The 110th Regiment stayed in place as they were assigned the center sector of the division. The regiment alone fought elements of five German divisions, of which it was outnumbered at times 7 to 1.

I must abbreviate due to time.

While there are many things that come to mind when we think of the Battle of the Bulge like the 101st Airborne, Patton's Armor, or Easy Company from the Band of Brothers, please also remember the names and places familiar to those others who held at all costs: the 103rd, the 109th, 110th, 111th, 112th of the 28th. These are the echoes of the 28th Division and the men who held at all costs and traded space for time so that the 101st and Patton's Third Army could get into position in time to defeat the German offensive.

□ 1015

Mr. Speaker, we can learn a lot from these dedicated soldiers who refused to surrender but fought on for what they believed in. I just wanted to remind everyone and to offer my salute to these finest Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to remind everybody about a real life story of being outnumbered 10 to 1.